

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (currently amended): A *Streptococcus thermophilus* bacterium ~~which is~~ resistant to attack by at least one bacteriophage ~~and which comprise, said bacterium comprising a~~ modification of an  $\phi$ Sfi21 prophage, ~~wherein the  $\phi$ Sfi21 prophage is modified by deletion of~~ sufficient DNA to disrupt expression of the ~~prophage in the bacterium~~ the bacterial chromosome sufficient to disrupt expression of a chorismate mutase chain A gene.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The bacterium according to claim 1 which is a strain of *S. thermophilus* selected from the group consisting of Sfi1 and Sfi1c16.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The bacterium according to claim 1 wherein the bacterial chromosome is modified by addition of DNA in ORF 90.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The bacterium according to claim 3 wherein the addition of DNA comprises ~~a bacterial insertion sequence of bases of (IS) S1 or a functional equivalent thereof.~~

Claim 5-6 (canceled).

Claim 7 (currently amended): The bacterium according to claim ~~1-35~~ wherein the modification comprises ~~a deletion of at least part of ORF\_1560~~ of the  $\phi$ Sfi21 prophage.

Claim 8 (canceled).

Claim 9 (currently amended): A composition comprising:

a *Streptococcus thermophilus* bacterial strain, ~~which has been mutated~~ including in a  $\phi$ Sfi21 prophage genome such that ~~phage propagation within the bacterium is substantially prevented,~~ wherein the ~~mutation comprises deletion of~~ modification of the bacterial chromosome sufficient DNA to disrupt expression of ~~the prophage a chorismate mutase chain A gene;~~ and

at least one component chosen from the group consisting of a carrier, adjuvant and diluent.

Claim 10 (currently amended): A starter culture comprising a *Streptococcus thermophilus* bacterial strain, ~~which has been mutated~~ including in a  $\phi$ Sfi21 prophage genome such that ~~phage propagation within the bacterium is substantially prevented,~~ wherein the ~~mutation comprises deletion of~~ modification of the bacterial chromosome sufficient DNA to disrupt expression of ~~the prophage a chorismate mutase chain A gene.~~

Claim 11-17 (canceled).

Claim 18 (previously presented): The composition according to claim 9 wherein the strain of *S. thermophilus* is selected from the group consisting of Sfi1 and Sfi1c16.

Claim 19 (currently amended): The composition according to claim 9 wherein the bacterial chromosome is modified by addition of DNA in ORF 90.

Claim 20 (previously presented): The composition according to claim 37 wherein the  $\phi$ Sfi21 prophage is modified by deletion of at least part of ORF 1560.

Claim 21 (currently amended): A milk product comprising a *Streptococcus thermophilus* bacterial strain, ~~which has been mutated~~ including in a  $\phi$ Sfi21 prophage genome such that ~~phage propagation within the bacterium is substantially prevented,~~ wherein the ~~mutation comprises deletion of~~ modification of the bacterial chromosome sufficient DNA to disrupt expression of ~~the prophage a chorismate mutase chain A gene.~~

Claim 22 (previously presented): The starter culture according to claim 10 wherein the strain of *S. thermophilus* is selected from the group consisting of Sf11 and Sf11c16.

Claim 23 (currently amended): The starter culture according to claim 10 wherein the bacterial chromosome is modified by addition of DNA in ORF 90.

Claim 24 (currently amended): The starter culture according to claim ~~40~~39 wherein the  $\phi$ Sf121 prophage is modified by deletion of at least part of ORF 1560.

Claim 25 (previously presented): The milk product according to claim 21 wherein the strain of *S. thermophilus* is selected from the group consisting of Sf11 and Sf11c16.

Claim 26 (currently amended): The milk product according to claim 21 wherein the bacterial chromosome is modified by addition of DNA in ORF 90.

Claim 27 (currently amended): The milk product according to claim ~~21~~41 wherein the  $\phi$ Sf121 prophage is modified by deletion of at least part of ORF\_1560.

Claim 28 (currently amended): A *Streptococcus thermophilus* bacterial strain, wherein ~~said strain is mutated in at least one of~~ the bacterial chromosome or ~~in the~~  $\phi$ Sf121 phage genome of said strain is modified such that phage replication within the bacterium is prevented, wherein the ~~bacterial chromosome comprises~~modification is selected from the group consisting of addition of DNA to the bacterial chromosome in ORF\_90 at a site which disrupts expression of a chorismate mutase chain A gene ~~and/or disrupts expression of ORF394, or~~ wherein the  $\phi$ Sf121 prophage is modified by ~~and~~ deletion of sufficient DNA to ~~disrupt expression of the prophage, wherein the mutation comprises a deletion to disrupt expression of~~ from at least part of ORF\_1560 of the  $\phi$ Sf121 prophage to disrupt expression of said prophage.

Claim 29 (previously presented): The *S. thermophilus* bacterial strain according to claim 28, wherein the bacterial strain of *S. thermophilus* is selected from the group consisting of Sf11 and Sf11c16.

Claim 30 (previously presented): A composition comprising the *S. thermophilus* bacterial strain of claim 28, wherein said composition comprises the bacterium together with a carrier, adjuvant or diluent.

Claim 31 (previously presented): The composition according to claim 30, which is a starter culture or milk product.

Claim 32–33 (canceled).

Claim 34 (new): The bacterium according to claim 1 wherein said bacterium comprises a modified  $\phi$ Sfi21 prophage.

Claim 35 (new): The bacterium according to claim 34 wherein the  $\phi$ Sfi21 prophage is modified by deletion of sufficient DNA to disrupt expression of the prophage in the bacterium.

Claim 36 (new): The composition according to claim 9 wherein said bacterium comprises a modified  $\phi$ Sfi21 prophage.

Claim 37 (new): The composition according to claim 36 wherein the  $\phi$ Sfi21 prophage is modified by deletion of sufficient DNA to disrupt expression of the prophage in the bacterium.

Claim 38 (new): The starter culture according to claim 10 wherein said bacterium comprises a modified  $\phi$ Sfi21 prophage.

Claim 39 (new): The starter culture according to claim 38 wherein the  $\phi$ Sfi21 prophage is modified by deletion of sufficient DNA to disrupt expression of the prophage in the bacterium.

Claim 40 (new): The milk product according to claim 21 wherein said bacterium comprises a modified  $\phi$ Sfi21 prophage.

Claim 41 (new): The milk product according to claim 40 wherein the  $\phi$ Sfi21 prophage is modified by deletion of sufficient DNA to disrupt expression of the prophage in the bacterium.